

Task Force on Community Engagement Meeting Notes: February 25, 2016

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Contents

Executive Summary 2

 Member Attendance List 3

Action Items..... 3

Meeting Notes 3

 Citizen Input..... 3

 Decision about Quorum..... 3

 Consensus Recommendations, Theme 3 continued..... 3

 Modification in Language of Theme #4: Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage and that some voices don’t count more than others. 3

 Consensus Recommendations, Theme #4: Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage..... 3

 Discussion Theme 4 related to balancing public input 3

 Considering the Financial Investments of Recommendations 3

 Decision: Financial Considerations 3

 Meeting Evaluation..... 3

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Executive Summary

The meeting convened on February 25, 2016, at 6:30pm with a quorum. This meeting was conducted at the 11th Street location. There was no citizen comment. The February 11, 2016 minutes were approved with no changes.

The group decided to change the number for quorum to six (6), since the Task Force now consists of 12 members after the resignation of one member. Quorum will include members present, as well as members who call in by phone.

The task force **completed their recommendations on Theme #3** – *Explain how input will be used and show how that input had an impact on the decision made.*

- C) Always give feedback to people who provide input.
- D) All boards and commissions will be structured to take public input, by including this directive in the by-laws
- E) By-laws will be enforced.

The Task Force modified the language for **Theme #4**

From: Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage and that some voices don't count more than others.

To: *Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage.*

The consensus was that the concern for getting balanced voices is addressed by recommendations in Theme 4 and under the other themes.

The group completed recommendations for **Theme #4 - Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage.**

- A) Invest in creating capacity and trust with under-represented communities.
 1. Connect with, or provide, an advocate/organizer for affected populations. This could be a community organization which advocates for the affected populations, and provides financial support for that advocacy.
 2. Identify and contract with recognized, trusted, vetted community organizations to organize, using appropriate techniques, opportunities for input from impacted, under-represented populations. Funding could be for either personnel or projects, or both.
- B) Give the public more conversational, dialogue opportunities for input, beyond City Council meetings. Help people feel they are being heard and it is worth it to be heard.
- C) City Council, Boards, and Commissions should follow a consistent, structured, transparent process from proposal to decision that allows the public to track online the progress and status of items. See Texas Legislature Online as an example.
 1. Expand transparency in the early stages
 2. Consider expanding the 72-hour window for publicizing agenda items
 3. Encourage putting agenda items out before the agenda is finalized.

The Task Force discussed how to include financial considerations in the final report.

The potential investment costs and savings will be indicated by dollar-sign symbols (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$, \$\$\$\$). These costs/savings will be based on comparing the recommendations to each other.

Member Attendance List

Celso Baez	Andrea Hamilton	Koreena Malone
Mike Clark-Madison	Chris Howe	Navvab Taylor
Margarita Decierdo	Chris Ledesma	Richard Fonte (left early)

Action Items

Who	What	When
Task Force	Prepare to make recommendations on Theme 5: Ensure that City staff have the support, training, tools and resources to do engagement well.	3/10/16

Meeting Notes

Citizen Input

There was no citizen input.

Decision about Quorum

The new quorum will be six (6) members, and includes members calling in by phone

Consensus Recommendations, Theme 3 continued

- C) Always give feedback to people who provide input.
- D) All boards and commissions will be structured to take public input. Include this directive in by-laws.
- E) Enforce the by-laws.

Modification in Language of Theme #4: Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage and that some voices don't count more than others.

The Task Force changed the language of this theme by deleting the clause "and that some voices don't count more than others."

The new language of Theme #4 is: **Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage.**

Consensus Recommendations, Theme #4: Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has the opportunity to engage.

- A. Invest in creating capacity and trust with under-represented communities.
 - 1. Connect with, or provide, an advocate/organizer for affected populations. This could be a community organization which advocates for the affected populations, and provides financial support for that advocacy.
 - 2. Identify and contract with recognized, trusted, vetted community organizations to organize, using appropriate techniques, opportunities for input from impacted, under-represented populations. Funding could be for either personnel or projects, or both.
- B. Give the public more conversational, dialogue opportunities for input, beyond City Council meetings. Help people feel they are being heard and it is worth it to be heard.

- C. City Council, Boards, and Commissions should follow a consistent, structured, transparent process from proposal to decision that allows the public to track online the progress and status of items. See Texas Legislature Online as an example.
 1. Expand transparency in the early stages
 2. Consider expanding the 72-hour window for publicizing agenda items
 3. Encourage putting agenda items out before the agenda is finalized.

Discussion Theme 4 related to balancing public input

The Task Force members had discussed the value of, and methods to, ensure that input is balanced among a variety of citizens – individuals and groups – so that no one voice is considered more important than others. After this discussion, the Task Force members decided to set the topic aside and not make recommendations specific to it; but did decide to change the language of Theme 4 (see page 2)

Considering the Financial Investments of Recommendations

The Task Force decided that they would not be able to identify specific dollar amounts of investment or cost savings for any of the specific recommendations. Rather, they would be able to estimate “high, medium, low” categories.

Ideas considered were:

- a) Get ballpark costs from staff, ranging from partial implementation of recommendations to full-scale implementation.
- b) Contact the non-Austin benchmarked organizations for information about their costs/savings.
- c) Label implementation on a scale of “simple” to “complex.”

Decision: Financial Considerations

The potential investment costs and savings will be indicated by dollar-sign symbols (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$, \$\$\$), and in **red** for investment; **green** for cost savings. These costs/savings will be based on comparing the recommendations to each other.

Meeting Evaluation

What we LIKED	What we would CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being back in 11th Street location • This meeting seemed more collaborative • Appreciate consensus-building • Finished another needs assessment theme • Had a quorum • Stayed on track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •